(v) The officers of the State Governments and the Ministry pay surprise checks to the FPSs, to oversee the quality of foodgrains being distributed through TPDS.

Inclusion of pulses and edible oils in PDS items

2076.SHRI MATILAL SARKAR: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware that the protein contents in food available to the poorer section is very low;

(b) whether Government has any plan to include pulses in the list of ration materials for the poorer section;

(c) whether Government is contemplating to include edible oil in the list of ration materials; and

(d) if so, the details of the programme of Government?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI TASLIMUDDIN): (a) The National Sample Survey Organization (NSSO) in its 61st Round survey (2004-05) has observed that there has been a marginal reduction in the per-capita consumption of pulses - by 6.6% in rural and 4.6% in urban areas.

(b) to (d) Yes, Sir. Government has recently introduced a scheme under which the Public Sector Agencies like National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India Ltd. (NAFED), MMTC, PEC Ltd and State Trading Corporation (STC) can import pulses and sell the same at a subsidy of Rs.10/- per kg to the State Governments for distribution of pulses through Public Distribution System (PDS). It will be the responsibility of the State Government to ensure that pulses imported under the scheme are lifted and the targeted consumers get it. The scheme, therefore, aims at augmenting availability of pulses within the country through imports specifically for supplying to the poorer sections through PDS at a subsidized price.

Government launched a scheme on 28.07.2008 to distribute one million tons of edible oils to States/UTs at a subsidy @ Rs.15/kg. Orders were placed for import of 3.60 lakh tons of edible oils. Of this, about 3.34 lakh tons of edible oil has landed; and about 1.82 lakh tons have so far been distributed to various States/UTs by Central PSUs for distribution to ration card holders @ 1 kg per ration card per month.

Profits made by MNCs engaged in trading of foodgrains

2077.SHRI KAMAL AKHTAR:
SHRI LALIT KISHORE CHATURVEDI:
DR. GYAN PRAKASH PILANIA:

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that in spite of shortage of foodgrains and crisis in their supply in the world, the profit of multinational companies such as Monsanto, Kargil, Sinzenta, Banj and Nobel is increasing continuously;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the profit of the companies engaged in the trading of foodgrains in India is also increasing like wise; and

(c) if so, whether there is any plan to check the exploitation of the consumers by these companies and for their relief?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH): (a) to (c) Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Record output of foodgrains

2078.SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether there has been a record foodgrain output this year;

(b) if so, what is the total output of foodgrains recorded during 2007-08;

(c) whether Government has decided to set aside 2 million tonnes of wheat to meet export requests;

(d) whether rising consumption would make India an importer of sugar;

(e) if so, whether Government has decided not to release orders of export of sugar from now; and

(f) if so, whether India would be able to meet foodgrain shortage which had caused great resentment during last year?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH): (a) and (b) As per 4th Advance Estimate of the Department of Agriculture and Cooperation released on 9.7.2008, the country registered record production of 215.56 million tonnes of foodgrains (rice, wheat and coarsegrains).

(c) In view of comfortable situation of wheat stock in Central Pool, it has been decided to allow export of upto 20 lakh tonnes of wheat from Central Pool, on diplomatic basis to friendly countries. The Ministry of External Affairs will make payment to FCI, at economic cost.

(d) The consumption of sugar has been rising with rise in population and income levels whereas production of sugar in the country is cyclic in nature. Two to three years of high production are followed by two-to-three years of low production. The import of sugar, in the years of low production of sugar depend upon the production level likely to be achieved in the sugar season and the stocks available in the country at that time.

(e) The Central Government, *vide* notification dated 31.07.2007 has dispensed with the requirement of obtaining a release order for export of sugar upto 30.09.2008 which has now been extended upto 31.12.2008 or till further orders, whichever is earlier in case of exports under Open General License (O.G.L.) and till further orders in case of exports under Advance Authorization Scheme.

(f) The demand and supply projection of wheat for 2008-09 and 2009-10 are as under:-